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Scenes Among the Skaters in Central Park.

. Central Pork gave itself airs last week. | pushed to the front. And this man had two ter was bee use the ball was up and furthermore it was up nearly four weeks sherd s met year's record-a feet, say the authoritics, which aug rewell for a longer skating seeson than New York has had in some

The man who rents skates at the lake. and has been seen at the same o'd stand for a good many years, remarked with satisfaction: "There will be a lot of good skating here this winter or I am much mistaken," and he said it with his coat off and perspira- I nine inches thick."

"All told," he remarked, stopping a second to mop his brow, "there were just sixteen days of skating on this lake last winter, all of them in February. First of all came two days, followed by snow and rain and after that nearly two weeks con-

"As a rule, though, the pond had to be cleared at night to give the ice a chance. To day the ice is splendid, at least eight or



ookers-on.

one good to look at.

on the ice, though.

HOT TIME AT THE SKATE COUNTER.

tion rolling down his face. That goes to show how hard he was working. It was noticed though that the harder he worked the happier he looked. "Two dollars deposit, madam and 25

ts an hour for the rent of the skates." rolled with monotonous glibness from his tongue, and no sooner were the words out

secutively.



THE LADY OF THE LAKE

sight.

only goes to prove how the climate has "A good thing, too, that it has," returned the other, "with coal practically out of

A noticeable contingent of those who visited the pond without skates consisted

one old man to another, as they shook hands. "It looks like old times.

there was skating on this pond pretty nearly

from December to March without a break. That was thirty years or more a :o. It

PUN FOR ALL BUT PAPA.

culiar to the New York dog under any and all circum-

beside his mistrees who, although she wore no skates, made a tour of the pond over and over again and insisted on taking



IS THE BALL UP? YOU BET YER LIFE

the skaters. Another dog, a big English bull, was less complacent. His mistress was on skates. But she didn't stay on them very long.

As she took the ice airily and gracefully bystanders were highly entertained to see that in one hand she grasped the leader of the buildog and in the other the fist



of a four-year-old youngster dressed all in white. The chubby legs of the four-year-old did their part valiantly and ould have made a pretty good showing too, had it not been that mamma's companion on the other side concluded that the pace was altogether too slow for him. even if he didn't have skates, and so proship under full sail. When last seen the stances. Most of them went on the ice.

One. a collie, trudged sedately along pavilion, and as the impatient building

timed up with the spectators on the bridge smiled benignly as he adjusted his spec-tacles and called a companion's attention to the number of family parties on the ice.

The chair man is doing a rushing busiess," he commented. And so he was. Almost every chair was

in use. The lake was dotted with the chars. In one case pater familias, somewhat heavy



tendance walking stolidly around on their feet much as usual. One woman could not hide her discoppointment. "I understood," said she, addressing a

policeman, "that all you policemen on duty at the lake were to wear skates."

THE LADY, THE BABY AND THE TIGER.

"Well, Miss," was the reply, "I have heard nothing about it. Up at Van Courtlandt Park the bicycle policemen wear skates when the lake is frozen over, but so far I haven't seen any around here. I don't think many of us know how to skate," and he looked down dubiously at his own somewhat substantial proportions.

An added source of satisfaction to night An added source of satisfaction to night skaters was mornlight which from 10 to 11,



INDICATIONS OF A WARM SPELL at least, changed the place into something

tike tarryland and then kindly lighted the skaters home. The sentimental ones were "Charlie and I went skating last night,"

almost as long as his legs in fact—and some nervous people are suggesting the advisability of having these very long skates suppressed.

"How is the skating to-day, sonny?" was asked of a youngster of twelve who was busy unstrapping a pair of skates about eighteen inches long.

"Fine," he exclaimed, with emphasis, and he grinned when he said it.

His record, it seems, for less than one hour's skating was to lay low a middleaged man of athletic build, and two young girls and almost to capsize a chair containing two small children. After the last exploit he was put off by a policeman. But he was back again the next day.

A rumor went the rounds early last week that skating policemen were to be a feature of all the parks from this time on, Central of all the parks from this time on, Central Park not excepted. Therefore, many visit-ors to the lake when the ball went up, were surprised to find all the blue coats in attheir way down town the next morning, and before I got home he asked me——a jangling trolley whizzed along just then and drowned the rest of the sentence.

## than a deal was closed and a new customer THEY SANG FOR FREMONT.

THE SNOW TOP QUARTET RE-UNITED AFTER MANY YEARS.

And Joseph Mather, Tenor, Holds High B Almost as Well as He Did in the Days Before the War-Four Mere Boys of 80 or So Still Carolling for Freedom.

Joseph W. Mather celebrated his eightythird birthday a week ago, and when the other gentlemen of the Slow Top Quartet gathered around the tuning fork Mr. Mather reached high B and held it as easily as he did forty-seven years ago when he was first tenor of the Frémont and Dayton Glee Club Quartet.

That high B was really the best thing at Mr. Mather's birthday party He enjoyed the congratulations on that account even more than his friends' praise of the home-made wine which he makes every fall at the old Mather homestead in Darien.

It was in "Fremont the True and the Bold" (air, Lutzow's "Wild Hunt") that Mr. Mather made his hit. That was one of the great show pieces of the quartet in the campaign of '56 and the one in which Joseph Mather as first tenor, had the best chance They always used to sing it just after Henry Ward Beecher or some other great orator had got through with his address

"Why, we would get almost as muc! applause for 'The True and the Bold,' id Mr. Mather the other day, in telling of his party, "as Horace Greeley got for his speeches. Greeley sometimes intro-du ed us at the meetings. He told an audience up at Chapp qua one night tla we made the best mus.c he ever heard. don't know whether Greeley knew anything about music or not, but that's what he said. I wish he could have heard us the other night when the boys came over to help me celebrate my birthday. It seemed to me that we sar g just about as well as we did fifty years ago. We stick to the old glees at all our gatherings. I don't believe that any one of the boys would dare suggest one of these ragtime tunes, Unless poss bly Aiken might want to try

one. But he's quite young."

Here's the star part of "Frémont the True and the Bold," showing the high note on which Mr. Mather acquitted himself like a young leading man on Broadway:

in arms were there a: well as old men who

swapped reminiscences with gusto and

body. Few of the elderly people ventured

"This sight is good for sore eyes," said

seemed to enjoy the fun as much a

was Barzillai Warner But he died twentyfive years ago, long before he reached his prime. So when the others got back to New York from California and other distant parts to which they had scattered they had to find a new friend and singer

they had to find a new friend and singer to renew the organization and sing the old songs.

Mr. Aiken was introduced by Mr. Camp. His voice stood the test of the part and he became one of the boys. He is only 69 years old, but the others never twit him about his age and he gets just as many opportunities as anybody to pick out the next riece.

recrunities as anybody to pick out the next piece.

Mr. Mather, Mr. Camp and Mr. Taylor all sang at political meetings in the Tippecanoe campaign, but not as an organization. Then, after the Frémont year, they sang again for Lincoln in 1860. They came to New York to make their fortunes from three adjoining towns in Fairfield, Conn. That was in 1840. In the '40s and '50s Taylor made pianos. Warner was in the Custom House in this city, Camp sang all the time and Mather was principal of a public school, in Chrystie street. The same school building star dis there now. A pupil of American parentage there to-day is something of a curiosity.

curiosity.

"In my time," said Mr. Mather, the day after the party, "we had 2,500 pupils in that school and they were alonest all Americans. I designed that school building, and it stands to-day just about as it was built from my

"Taylor was standing there, too, warming his hands. He turned around quick as a flash and eyed me. Then he began to hum:

Our standard bearer, then, The brave Path Finder bet Free Speech, Free Press, Free Soil, Free Men, Fré-ment and Victory. "Well, I just forgot where I was. I eyed

"Well, I just forgot where I was. I eyed him then for a minute. He spoke first.

"Joe, Joe Mather,' he said.

"Frank, Frank, the second bass,' I said.

"Then we shook hands till some of the guests wanted to know if we were brothers. You see, Taylor is only 80 years old, but he looks just as old as I am, every day of it. I don't know but what somebody who didn't know might think he was a triffe older.

"Well, we stole away from the company and came up here to my room. I got out the tuning fork (it's the same one we used in 1856), and the old Frémont Glee Book. I'm almost as careful of that as I am of my Bible. I never saw any one so tickled as Frank Taylor was when he saw that book. He mislaid his somewhere thirty or forty years ago, but he remembered aimost everything in it. Then I got out a tottle of wine I make every year. I retired some years ago, and I spend all my out a bottle of wine I make every year. I retired some years ago, and I spend all my summers and fails on the Mather homestead up in Darien. I look after the vineyard for exercise and generally press out some of the grapes. We have a little wine every week now when we come together to sing. The boys tell me it's better than champagne. There is a little sparkle to it.

"But I was telling you how we got reorganized. Frank stayed up in my room that night till about 12 o'clock and we sang more than half way through the book.

latter going through a first experience on a

skating pond with every appearance of

Some of the chair's best customers, though, are beginners, who, failing to secure

the support of some self-sacrificing friend,

cheerfully pay down 25 cents for the sake

of having something, anything, to cling

or naving something, anything, to cling to at a desperate moment.

One type of skaters to be seen in all his glory at the lake just now is the very young man. He comes early and stays late and generally he wears a very short coat, very bright necktie and gloves of the gauntlet variety which he seems to think give a sporty touch to his appearance. His most assidious attentions of a mile of the seems to the seems to the seems to the seems to think give a sporty touch to his appearance.

assidicus attentions as a rule are directed to the school girls, gay and care-free, who come tripping along hands in pockets and skates fastened to shoes slung about their

But don't think they are idle, though
They neither hoe nor rake.
For half the Stock on the Auction Block
The sellers belied to make.
This the only work the great F. F's
Dou't think a tedious bore,
Why wasn't I born in old Virginny,
On old Virginny's shore?



MR. MATHER.

THE SNOW TOPS.

MR. AIKEN.

But I was telling you how we got reorganized. Frank stayed up in my room
that night till about 12 o'clock and we sang
more than half way through the book.

"Soon after that we hunted up Camp.
Then Aiken came in, and that's how we
were reunited after all those years.

"To tell the truth, my birthday fell this
vear on a Sunday, Jan II, so we didn't
have the real party till Monday We didn't
want to cut loose on Sunday. I tell you
some of those songs are pretty lively pieces.

"The celebration began on Saturday
night Henry and Frank and George
and myself had seats together over at the

MB. CAMP.

"We would come out good and strong on stock' and 'auction block,' and the audience would just yell.

It was rather broad, but feeling between the North and South ran pretty high in those days. Still, as I say, we never sang the F. F's before a mixed audience."

audience."

Another song not originally printed in the glee book but pasted in on a separate slip was called the "Express Song." It is interesting because William Cullen Bryant was the author, and as showing what hot things political opponents could say of each other in those days. It has never

not doing much that we'd call work. It appeared in any of the editions of Bryant's went this way:

ONE PURPOSE OF GOING SKATING.

Air-A Latte More Cider, Too. Erastus Brooks of the Express
Is really nominated

Is really nominated
For Governor of New York State;
Oh! Isn't be elated?
He'll swell and strut and strut and swell
And cut up many a caper
And lots of monstrous dirty stuff
Will publish in his paper.

And a little more lying, too,
And a little more lying, too,
A little more lying hoo,
A little more lying he'll be trying,
A little more lying, too.

At this he's struggled long and hard,
And done all sorts of evil;
He sold his hedy to the South,
His soul unto the d——I.
The Advertiser tied its hand,
But couldn't hold a candle
To Toosel Brooks of the Express
In dealing out the scandal.

Premont's religion much concerns The politician pious:
He swears he is a Catholic,
Does modern Ananias:
And in the face and eyes of all,
The plainest contradictions. These brazen sheets reiterate The Cook and Fulmer nettor

While we distike religious tests,
The story's getting common.
That our chivairous Brooks himself
Is secretely a Mormoni
That he's a hundred wives at least,
Kept in seclusion quiet.
That Bishon Hug has pronounced the bans—
If false, let him deny it.

Many of the songs in this old campaign glee book have a religious tinge and the words were set to the music of "America" so that the crowds could join in. Others were to the tune of "Yankee Doodle." They were all for Frémont and freedom, and the song writers of 1856 seemed to take it for granted that war with the South was sure to come. The pet name of Charles John Frémont in that campaign was Charley. Here's another sample of the roof raisers:

The Western boys, both great and small,
But never a Southern bully.
Stand ready all to roll the ball
For our heroic Charley.

Stand resdy all to roll the ball
For our heroic Charley.

The tune for that was "Who'll be King but Charle."

The fact that Mr. Mather thought that he and his friends would have more fun by having their celebration on Monday, a day late, may be explained by the first tenor's ancestry. He's the lineal descendant in the eighth generation of the Rev. Richard Mather, father of Cotton Mather, the noted New England divine. The Rev. Richard, who was the son and grandson of clergymen, had five sons. One of them, Increase, was the father of Cotton. Another, Timothy, was the direct ancestor of Joseph W. Mather of Brooklyn. Hundreds of Mathers from this original stock have been clergymen.

"Things are different now than they used to be," said Mr. Mather the other day. "Let me tell you, just to illustrate, of the remarkable case of Nathaniel Mather, a son of increase and brother of Cotton. At 3 years he could read Greek and Latin. At 13, when he entered Harvard, he had read the Bible through in Greek and Latin. At 13, when he entered Harvard, he had read the Bible through in Greek and Latin. At 13, when he entered Harvard, he had read the Bible through in Greek and Latin. At 15 he was graduated at the head of his class and his valedictory was on "The Condition of Hebrew Thought in America."

At 17 he was assistant minister to his father and in correspondence with the savants of Europe. And at 19 he died. The candle burned out at both ends. If he had lived he would have all known about him in place of Cotton.

"Mrs. Jessie Benton Frémont used to

CROPS RAISED BY ANTS. Skill in Fertilizing and Pruning Shown by Some Species.

Recent study of ants has added another to the many facts that show the intelligence these insects possess. This latest discovery is that some species actually plant and raise their own crops. The big leaf-cutting ant of the tropics

is the most proficient species in the agricultural line. These ants visit plants and cut little fragments out of the leaves. Sometimes they will ruin a whole plantation over night, leaving the plants with ragged fragments of their foliage.
Until recently it was supposed that the

leaf-cutters ate the pieces of leaf. But now it is known that they carry the fragments to their mounds, where they chew them over and over, moistening them at the same time with seid secretions, until they have made a soft spongy mass. This is kneaded and worked over and over again until it is a big heap full of small holes. In this spongy mass the ants deposit

the spores of a certain fungus which forms the greater part of their food supply. Different species of anta have different species of fungus. The most highly developed of them all is grown by a Brazilian ant. It is known as

very rich and full of albumen, which is particularly loved by the ants. To produce most albumen the fungus must not be permitted to seed. Of course this is a simple matter, well known to every florist and agriculturist. But it cer-tainly is wonderful that ants should have

the Rossles gongilophora. This fungus is

learned it.

They attend to the pruning of the fungus stems and suckers just as carefully as a human planterwould. As soon as the fungus begins to grow it sends out fine thread-like stems into the air. If these are allowed to grow they will finally bear spores. But the ants do not permit them to grow.

They keep certain members of their colories.

busy biting them off the moment they appear.

After being prured for a short time the fungus begins to develop little swellings which are particularly rich in albumen. And after being cultivated for a few months the little swellings are found everywhere around the bottom of the pile.

Some species of ante carry fertilizers to their gardens. They bear finely chewed wood, mouldering leaves, dead insects and other similar material to the fungus plantations to enrich the soil and increase their wield.

Subsoliing With Dynamite.

From the Philadelphia Record.

remarkable case of Nathaniel Mather, a son of Increase and brother of Cotton. At 15, when he entered Harvard, he had read the Bible through in Greek and Hebrew. At 16 he was graduated at the head of his class and his valedictory was on The Condition of Hebrew Thought in America. At 17 he was assistant minister to his father and in correspondence with the savants of Europe. And at 19 he died. The candle burned out at both ends. If he had lived he would have been the great Mather and we would have all known about him in place of Cotton.

"Mrs. Jessie Benton Frémont used to the firme about my ancestors," said Mr. Mather, "and ask me if Cotton wasn't a slaveholder himself."

From the Philadelphia Record.

"Strange are some of the farming methods of Cotton at the head of his class and his valedictory was on The Condition in, and started from my seat, thinking that a dreadul exticsion had occurred. But my host teld me, with a lauch, that his men were merely ploug ing with dynamite. Then he went on to explain that when it was desired to losen up the soil to a death of three feet or so dynamite cartridges were set in the eight and fired of They broke up the ground the word of the vine grow. They was deather than any machine or any manual labor could do And, in addition to this, they destroyed the parasite called the phylloxera, the bane of the grow Thought whose soil had been dynamited, my host said, ever suffered from the phylloxera after wark.

The others, when this was reached.

all stopped singing instinctively. Three this heads came closer together and three I insisted on them as a precaution against